

Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP)

Steering Committee Meeting

Meeting Summary Notes

February 23, 2007, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Action Items and Key Decisions

- Science Subgroup should convene to address role of science in BDCP process with following charge:
 - To ensure BDCP process is structured to achieve NCCP science requirements
 - To make recommendations on where/how independent scientific input occur in BDCP process
- Meeting documents will be sent with meeting notes in future; Resources Agency staff will determine which documents should be posted on website

1. Introductions and Updates

- See attached document (02.23.07 list of attendees.xls) for list of meeting attendees
- 2/9/07 Steering Committee meeting was substituted with a Conservation Strategy Subgroup meeting
- Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force (DV) official announcement occurred last week
 - First meeting will be 3/1/07
 - 41 stakeholders
 - DV scope includes land use, governance, long-term vision for Delta management, while BDCP focuses on coordinating permitting agreement and resources protection
 - Karen Scarborough will be coordinating with DV

2. Science Presentation and Discussion

Delta Regional Ecosystem Restoration Implementation Plan (DRERIP): Scientifically Evaluating Restoration Actions

Prof. Denise Reed (University of New Orleans, Earth Sciences Department)

- Program started in 2002, result of Ecosystem Restoration Plan (ERP) Strategic Plan
- Led by four research scientists working with multiple resource agencies
- Product: peer-reviewed science tools (conceptual models for species, habitats, and processes) used to evaluate actions, identify knowledge gaps, facilitate adaptive management, engage wide array of experts to distill ecological knowledge/data into usable conceptual models
- Key benefits of DRERIP-BDCP collaboration and information-sharing:

- Conceptual models will be complete by June 2007 and will be usable for BDCP for impact analysis, setting biological objectives, and developing conservation measures
- Many Delta experts are engaged in the conceptual model development
- Scientific review processes is used
- Incorporation of science-based models will complement the policy process
- Project is supported by fish and wildlife agencies
- Pooling expertise will expedite and improve outcomes
- Question and answer session focused on where and how DRERIP conceptual models can be incorporated into BDCP process, and distinguishing between conceptual models and their uses from predictive and quantitative models and their uses.

3. Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) Presentation and Discussion

Envisioning Futures for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta

Prof. Jay Lund (University of California, Davis, Civil and Environmental Engineering Department)

- A new understanding of Delta has emerged in last decade; freshwater model no longer seen as a viable management strategy
- PPIC worked with academic researchers to analyze and model most current environmental science and water and agricultural economics in Delta, then identified opportunities for promising new solutions to management challenges
- Report published February 2007
- Nine representative management alternatives were identified, including:
 - 3 freshwater Delta alternatives,
 - 3 fluctuating Delta alternatives, and
 - 3 reduced water-exports alternatives
- Most promising, according to PPIC analysis, were fluctuating Delta alternatives including “Peripheral Canal Plus” and “South Delta Aqueduct”
- Key recommendations:
 - Focus on promising alternatives and combine for best benefit
 - Increase technical analysis, research and development for problem-solving
 - Enhance regional and state-wide representation in Delta planning process
 - Implement “beneficiaries-pay” model
 - Establish mitigation mechanisms because benefits will not be universal
 - Incorporate some “no-regrets” actions into any plan, including:
 - Emergency preparedness
 - “Do not resuscitate” strategy for some of the Delta islands
 - Change land-use to focus on
 - Flood control for urbanization and
 - Habitat protection
 - Habitat restoration
- Question and answer session focused on ability of economic models to analyze costs and benefits of possible BDCP conservation alternatives and conservation measures

- PPIC report available at <http://www.ppic.org>

4. Conservation Strategy (CS) Subgroup Update and Discussion

BDCP governance reminder from Karen Scarborough: Steering Committee is responsible for all decision-making; Subgroups undertake analysis and make recommendations to the Steering Committee

Anthony Saracino (co-chair CS Subgroup) reported on the 2/9/07 Subgroup meeting. The main components of that meeting were:

- Presentation and definitions of terms used in BDCP
 - Discussion was productive but not complete
 - Goal of next meeting is to finalize recommended Conservation Goals
- Discussion of Conservation Strategy alternatives decision-making process
 - Recommendation from committee will be to carry forward several Conservation Strategy alternatives through summer 2007 in order to better parallel other planning processes
- Brief and unfinished discussion of whether an Isolated Facility/Peripheral Canal would be considered a Covered Activity or Conservation Measure or both

Presentation: Definition of terms, planning process, and schedule

Paul Cylinder (of SAIC) reviewed information provided at CS Subgroup meeting including key definitions for BDCP, deliverables and tasks in this planning process, and the timeline for deliverables from the consultants. Planning Goals include conservation and stakeholder goals. Conservation Goals lead to (in order of specificity), Biological Goals, and Objectives. Conservation Measures are the specific actions implemented to achieve Biological Goals and Objectives.

The next meeting of the CS Subgroup will be 2/26/07 from 12:00pm to 3:00pm in the DWR Conference Room (Resources Building, 1416 9th St, Room 1131, Sacramento).

5. Membership Subgroup Update

Tim Quinn (co-chair Membership Subgroup) reported that Subgroup had met, reviewed applications from Farm Bureau and Defenders of Wildlife, interviewed applicants, and would be making recommendation to the Steering Committee to accept both applicants.

Statement from Kim Delfino (State Director, Defenders of Wildlife):

Defenders of Wildlife supports regional planning, wants to see it work, and has experience in this type of planning. They are fairly new to Delta systems, but have experience in Colorado River and Salton Sea. They appreciate the changes that were made to the planning agreement based on their comments, which were thorough and critical, and accept the planning agreement as it stands now. They believe a successful outcome to BDCP is possible, though will be difficult, and appreciate opportunity to apply to be an official part of the process.

Statement from Kenny Watkins (2nd President, Farm Bureau): The Farm Bureau is committed to working on BDCP process, representing farmers in the Delta and south of the Delta. They bring expertise to the process through their many years of negotiations, and are committed to bringing the science and what's learned in this committee back to the farming constituency.

There will not be a full report from the Subgroup on the application process but they will circulate a summary of activities.

6. Next Steps- Other Matters

Discussion of whether to convene Science Subgroup and what its charge would be. Decision was made to convene Subgroup. See Action Items for charge to Subgroup.

7. Meeting Notes Review and Approval

Meeting notes from January were approved. Request made that documents associated with Steering Committee meeting be sent out with meeting summaries. Cindy Darling noted that some of those documents can be posted on the BDCP website. BDCP coordinating staff will determine which documents will be posted. See Action Items for full decision statement.

8. Public Comments

Matt Vander Sluis (Planning and Conservation League). PCL supports the Conservation Strategy Subgroup recommendation to move forward with multiple conservation strategies in the near term. They would like to learn what Conservation Strategies have been in other processes so they can calm people's fears about the size of the decisions being made in this early stage of BDCP process. The reason for the comment is a PPIC report co-author has said he thinks it will take 1-2 years to really flesh out the alternatives in their report, which is longer than the BDCP time frame for determining a final CS. PCL recommends that BDCP process consider historical conditions and future constraints, and integrate historical data and climate change in decision-making. Finally: would like to hear further discussion on the finalized BDCP Work Plan. K. Scarborough responded that the Work Plan is in final form but will continue to evolve, as needed.

Dave Briggs (Contra Costa Water District): CCWD recommends looking at a broad range of alternatives, not a narrow one. Specifically, they would like to see more distinctions between fluctuating and freshwater Delta alternatives.

Next Meeting

March 9, 2007, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Same location (Room 1131, Resources Building).